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CSS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U S DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

RA 4-4--

BI No. 18

March 1960

FEB 5 - 1962

C&R - PREP.

EMERGENCY FEED PROGRAMS

When emergencies or disasters strike agricultural areas, government-owned surplus feed grains may be made available to eligible farmers and livestock producers by the Secretary of Agriculture. The nature and severity of the emergency are the major factors in determining the type of program made available in an area. A brief explanation of the four emergency feed programs available and the general administration of these programs follows:

The Disaster Relief Feed Program

Under the Disaster Relief Feed Grain Program government-owned designated surplus feed grain is made available free of charge. This program is used in areas hit by sudden disaster such as a flood or hurricane. In general, the feed grain is made available to feed flood-stranded, unidentified, comingled livestock for which feed or pasture is not available. Feed under this program is made available for a limited time only.

Government-owned feed grain is usually delivered in carload lots to a point of distribution in the disaster area. The State Government has the responsibility for distribution of the grain. Although the grain is delivered to the distribution point in the State without cost to the State, all expenses incurred in its local distribution are the responsibility of the State Government.

The Emergency Feed Program

This program is designed to assist eligible ranchers, farmers and stockmen in designated disaster areas. The assistance consists of providing a share of the cost of designated surplus feed grains, or approved mixed feed, needed to maintain foundation herds of livestock during periods of emergency. The designated surplus feed grains in the spring of 1960 are barley, corn, grain sorghum, and oats. Currently the rate of assistance is \$1.00 per hundredweight for the designated surplus feed grains.

Those eligible for assistance must meet the following general requirements: (1) their financial condition is such that they require assistance to maintain their foundation herd of cattle, sheep, or goats, and continue livestock operations, (2) they obtain more than 50 percent of their annual gross income from farming or ranching.

A request for assistance for an area must be made by the Governor of the State in which the area is located. The request is made to the President of the United States through the Regional Civil Defense Administrator.

The program in the county is administered by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee and applications for assistance are accepted at the committee office.

The Livestock Feed Program

Under the Livestock Feed Program government-owned designated surplus grain may be sold to eligible livestock owners, at the current price support level, in designated emergency areas. The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to designate emergency areas after he has determined that there is a shortage of feed because of flood, drought, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, or other catastrophe, including disease or insect infestation. In

addition, certification of the need for the program must be made by the Governor of the State to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Currently the designated surplus feed grains under this program are corn, barley, grain sorghum, and oats.

Sales of the surplus grains are made only to those livestock owners who are unable to obtain sufficient feed through normal channels of trade without undue financial hardship.

Local administration of the program is by the County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee.

Grazing Conservation Reserve Acreage

Conservation Program regulations provide that Conservation Reserve acreage is not to be grazed during the contract period. The only exception to this regulation is under emergency conditions and then only after the Governor of the State has certified to the Secretary of Agriculture the need for grazing, and the Secretary has made certain determinations. The Secretary must determine that grazing is needed to alleviate damage, hardship or suffering caused by severe drought, flood, or other natural disasters.

When grazing of Conservation Reserve land is permitted, it is restricted to the producer's own livestock, and the producer is required to forego the annual Reserve payment for the year the land is grazed. If the grazing destroys the conservation cover, the cover must be reestablished at the producer's expense.

The program is administered by the county ASC committee.

Administration

The Secretary of Agriculture has established USDA disaster committees to assist him in carrying out his responsibilities in providing livestock feed and other assistance under disaster conditions.

There is a USDA disaster committee in each county. The committee is composed of agricultural officials, and if a county suffers an agricultural disaster representative farmers or businessmen may assist the committee.

Each State has a USDA disaster committee, appointed by the Secretary. The State ASC Chairman is ex officio the chairman of the committee. In addition, the State Director of the Agricultural Extension Service, the State Director of the Farmers Home Administration, and the State Director of Civil Defense are members of the committee. Two additional non-government members who are familiar with the agriculture of the State may be appointed when the need arises.

The USDA Disaster Committee in Washington is composed of executives of various agencies within the Department and a representative of the Farm Credit Administration.

(Note: In addition to emergency feed programs, there are other emergency programs that may be made available in disaster areas. These programs, administered by other agencies of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, include credit, conservation, and surplus foods.)

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